



Nov 4 - 85

Johnny & Pearl

see Barton, Johnny,
and Art Conley & John-
Clark Hager

see Barton - Snake R
John Carey - Art Conley
Salmon River books

To: Jim AKENSON

HISTORY

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September 2, 1986

To ... Dean, College of Forestry
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83843

From ... Warren H. Bolles
School of Forestry - B S Forestry 1926
University of Idaho

SEP 05 1986

A recent review of my files revealed the enclosed clipping which might be desired by the School of Forestry for historical purposes.

I was forest ranger on the South Fork of Salmon Ranger District, Idaho National Forest, during the summer of 1927. The Willy Ranch was 13 miles by horse trail upriver from the South Fork Ranger Station. This station was located where the auto road from McCall to BigCreek crossed the SouthFork of Salmon River.

Official travel took me to the Willy Ranch on numerous occasions and I became well acquainted with the family. The family had dwindled to four members at that time--the father Simon Willy, son Warner, daughter Pearl and a 2-year old child who Pearl was mothering for a sister.

The Willys had about 25 head of cattle and Warner and I spent a couple of days locating salt grounds for better distribution of cattle and improved range management. The Willys put up about 10 tons of hay, since it was usually necessary to feed for 6 or 8 weeks each winter.

The ranch lay on the north side of the South Fork on a bench sloping to the river and was partially irrigated by water from Sheep Creek, a small stream east of the ranch. There were about 20 acres under ditch. The Willys always had an excellent garden and a large cherry orchard which brought neighbors for 20 miles at harvest time. The nearest neighbor was the Fritzer family, six miles up theSouth Fork.

One evening the discussion fell to prohibition and Mr. Willy said, "We'll see how the new ranger stands on prohibition." He then proceeded to bring out a jug of cherry wine and poured each a water glass full. It slipped down easily and next day my companion remarked, "One more glass of that and a fellow wouldn't be able to hit the ground with his hat." I was there on several later occasions, but no wine was forthcoming.

The Willys made two trips to McCall, about 50 miles by horse, each year for supplies. Why they didn't have them sent out via the South Fork Ranger Station I'll never know, but guess they wanted to visit McCall.

Willys' Wilderness Battles Recalled by Photographs

By EARL WILLSON

YELLOW PINE—This story is exclusively about a productive parcel of land in the remote South Fork of the Salmon River, and a couple which squatted there in 1895, after deciding to quit trying to make a living and rear a family in the old placer mining town of Warren.

The accompanying photographs were taken many years after Mr. and Mrs. S. A. (Sim) Willy had the fortitude to tackle a wilderness area and then bit by bit, using most primitive hand tools cultivated the virgin soil.

They propagated their primitive surroundings with offspring, and continued to extend that cultivation and production into a diversified crop of hay, vegetables, fruits and finally a sizeable herd of cattle.

A photograph of the entire family is included among others gathered in many exhaustive days of research. Some of them supposedly were lost because of fires or indifference to their future value.

Pretty Complete

Now, however, we have a pretty complete pictorial story of this pioneer family, and Willy's previous entrance into Warren where he was engaged in placer mining with his brother, the late Norman Willy, who later became the first governor of Idaho.

This writer had personal first-hand contact with this family as early as 1910.

Later, too, we recall a sufficient increase in the number

Pine postmaster and founder of village, Albert C. Behne.

Recently the photograph was turned over to the writer by Mrs. Kissinger, just long enough to have a duplicate made for publication.

It was, however, through diligent research, that these three photographs were resurrected, and now they will be as a permanent reminder of this old and productive homestead where the old folks are interred with two of their children.

During this writer's research last winter we were unable to locate a single photograph of the family, because they either were destroyed in residential fires or lost through indifference or just plain carelessness. Rarely Possible

Rarely is it possible to get a photograph that includes nearly every member of a family born and reared within the confines of a comparatively small area or adjacent to it.

However, the accompanying group photograph of the Willy family is an exception, and these family pictures will no longer be lost to posterity because eventually they will become permanently filed with the Idaho Historical Society in Boise.

This writer was indeed fortunate also to receive the accompanying photograph from Mrs. Zumwalt before this story was submitted for publication. And, quite likely Mrs. Zumwalt's picture will recall many nostalgic memories around Boise.



MR. AND MRS. S. A. WILLY and family are shown here as they appeared sometime about the turn of the century. One daughter, Edith, had died and was buried on the ranch many years before. Gathered together in one of those rare moments free of work were from left to right Mr. Willy, Blanche, Argle, Mrs. Willy, Mary, Pearl, George, Ernest, Raymond and Warner.

or children in the family to entitle them to have a school on the ranch under the very capable tutoring of Mrs. Mary (Charles) Zumwalt with whom we lost contact over the many years that elapsed.

Then recently when we were about to give up finding her, or anything about her, a letter from her in The Sunday Statesman revealed her present residence as Los Angeles.

This letter told of her teaching at the Willy and Duston ranches. But she had a vast teaching career all the way from Weiser to the Seven Devils Mountains, where she organized school districts in old mining camps, and even became a part of the gold rush into the then booming Thunder Mountain areas of Idaho.

Wild West Opened

At one point in her letter, Mrs. Zumwalt, who is in her 90s, said when she was 16 years old in 1889, the Wild West was being opened to settlers, so she and her husband, Charles, took the second train out of Chicago over the newly finished Northern Pacific Railroad to Tacoma, and later helped open up the Northwest Territory.

This writer knew Mrs. Zumwalt when she was teaching on the South Fork and her husband, Charles, or "Zu" as he was more commonly called.

He drove stage into Warren during the summer months and mushed it into Warren behind mail dogs and also over Elk Creek summit into the then active but remote postoffice of Edwardsburg.

Later, after the loss of an only son, Huber, in the First World War, Mrs. Zumwalt became active in Red Cross work at Boise.

Incidentally, too, we have reliable information to the effect that a Veterans of Foreign Wars post in or near Nampa was dedicated as the Huber Zumwalt Post.

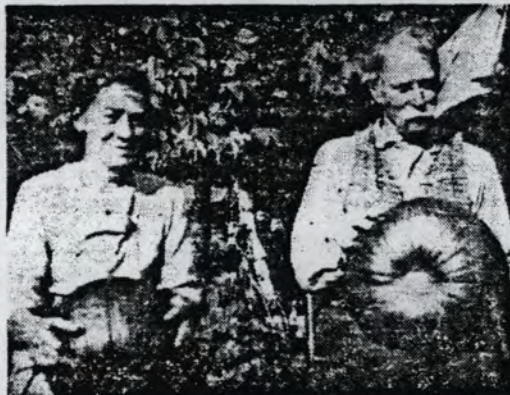
Deserves Credit

In submitting the accompanying photograph of the Willy ranch with its original log structures, Harry Withers of Yellow Pine deserves credit as the donor.

The other rare photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Willy, while displaying a product of the remote and isolated ranch, was at one time the property of the Yellow



ON THE SOUTH FORK of the Salmon River, the historical Willy ranch of Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Willy is shown here as it appeared in its prime. Mrs. Charles Zumwalt taught school in the log building on the right foreground and the Willy children were only ones enrolled.



HARD WORK and determination, with the assistance of hand tools, were what Mr. and Mrs. S. A. (Sam) Willy used to raise these plump pumpkins on their ranch sometime after the turn of the century. The land was productive but also remote and primitive. The members of a large family contributed their efforts to their livelihood.



PIONEER TEACHER, Mrs. Mary (Charles) Zumwalt taught her classes in remote places in Idaho's early days. For a while she taught the Willy children in a rough log outbuilding that served as a schoolhouse and classroom after the turn of the century, when hard work and individualism were the necessities of life.